
1060 MEDIAN OPENINGS

The purpose of a divided highway is to promote the safe and efficient movement of traffic. To avoid inconveniencing motorists and diverting business from abutting properties, median openings should be designed and spaced to channelize left turns and U-turns into an orderly pattern without impairing the basic design features of the roadway.

Median openings should be placed as near as possible to the subdivision lines of the public survey sections. Where practicable, subdividers of abutting lands should provide parallel frontage roads to minimize the necessity for median openings.

All median openings shall be designed to include median storage lanes for both directions of travel. The length of storage lanes shall be determined from appropriate traffic data but shall not be less than 100 feet. The length of taper shall be determined from the design speed of the roadway.

Median openings at intersections shall be established to provide access to improved public streets at a spacing which provides for adequate left-turn (U-turn) storage lanes. The spacing between median openings at intersections shall not be less than 330 feet.

Median openings between intersections may be established for public safety and convenience if indicated by an appropriate engineering study, provided that:

- a. In an urban area, the opening is not closer than 660 feet to an intersection with an improved public street or another median opening.
- b. In a rural area, the median opening is not less than 1320 feet from an intersection with an improved public road or another median opening.

Median openings may be established for a business generating relatively high traffic volumes, provided that:

- a. The minimum left-turn traffic volume is 500 vehicles per day or 100 vehicles during the peak hour in urban areas where the major street speed limit is less than 40 miles per hour.
- b. The minimum left-turn traffic volume is 350 vehicles per day or 70 vehicles during the peak hour in:
 - (1) urban areas where the major street speed limit is 40 mph or greater;
 - (2) isolated communities having a population less than 10,000; and
 - (3) rural areas.
- c. The distance to the nearest adjacent median opening is not less than 330 feet.

For the purpose of these guidelines, an urban area exists where property abutting the highway is 50% developed and improved for a minimum length of 1/2 mile on either side of the roadway and a regular pattern of side streets has been dedicated and improved for public usage. A rural area is a location not classified as urban.